

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

INCOMING

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

POL 18 NE

ACTION
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Classification

Control: RECIFE 1595

Recd: DEC 18, 1968
9:54 AM

P R 172035Z DEC 68
FM AMCONSUL RECIFE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2185
INFO RUESUA/AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO 2583
RUESUZ/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 220
RUESUP/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 67
STATE GRNC

BT

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SUBJECT: NE SITUATION REPORT

REF: RECIFE 1580

1. RECIFE GIVES APPEARANCE OF REIGNING CALM DESPITE CONSIDERABLE CONFUSION AMONG POLITICALLY AWARE WHICH HEIGHTENED BY ABSENCE RELIABLE INFORMATION REGARDING TRUE IMPLICATIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL ACT FIVE, (IA-5), AS WELL AS MEASURES WHICH HAVE THUS FAR BEEN TAKEN UNDER ITS AUTHORITY. CONSIDERABLE CONCERN REGARDING ANTICIPATED ARRESTS AND CASSATIONS OF LOCAL POLITICAL LEADERS HAS BEEN EXPRESSED TO CONGEN REPS.
2. EFFORTS AT PRESS CENSORSHIP WHICH THUS FAR APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY EFFECTIVE ONLY ADDS TO CONFUSION BY CUTTING OFF SOURCES OF RELIABLE INFORMATION. PRESS SOURCES REPORT MILITARY REPS APPEARED AT TWO MAJOR RECIFE DAILIES AT 5 AM MORNING DEC 14 TO REVIEW DAY'S EDITION. MILITARY REAPPEARED EVENING SAME DAY AND CAREFULLY REVIEWED CONTENTS SUNDAY EDITIONS BOTH PAPERS. THIRD SECTION OF DIARIO DE PERNAMBUCO REPNTCTEDLY RETRACTED BECAUSE IT CARRIED REPORT ON DOM HELDER. MILITARY IN GENERAL REMOVED ALL MATERIAL WITH POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS AND REFUSED TO ALLOW PUBLICATION LIST OF PRISONERS, EXCEPT AS APPROVED. MILITARY PRESENCE AT PAPERS ENDED DEC 16 BUT EDITIONS PUBLISHED TODAY CONTAIN NO CONTROVERSIAL ITEMS. PRESS RANKS RIFE WITH RUMORS OF IMPENDING ARRESTS OF REPORTERS AND STAFF OF RECIFE DAILIES.
3. IN OBVIOUS EFFORT REASSURE SITUATION, FOURTH ARMY COMMANDER GENERAL MALAN SPOKE ON TV AND RADIO EVENING DEC 16 GIVING BRIEF JUSTIFICATION IA-5. ACT, HE EXPLAINED, RESULTED FROM NECESSITY TO PREVENT FRUSTRATION OF IDEALS OF 1964 REVOLUTION. MALAN ADDED THAT LISTENERS COULD BE CERTAIN THAT STEPS AUTHORIZED BY IA-5 WOULD BE TAKEN ONLY

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PAGE -2 RECIFE 1595

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WHEN ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY AND ONLY THEN IN "SENSE OF JUSTICE"
SO AS PRESERVE HUMAN DIGNITY. TEXT OF MALAN ADDRESS BEING
POUCHED.

5. STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FOR COSTA E SILVA AND IA-5 SLOW
IN COMING. ONLY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE REPORTED TODAY
THAT OF RECIFE MAYOR AUGUSTO LUCENA, WHO REPORTEDLY CABLED
PRESIDENT PLEDGING SOLIDARITY IN OWN NAME AND THAT OF
PEOPLE OF RECIFE FOR STEPS TAKEN TO REESTABLISH INTERNAL
ORDER AND INSURE CONTINUITY OF REVOLUTIONARY WORK. SIMILAR
CABLES SENT TO ARMED FORCES CHIEFS. CABLE OF SOLIDARITY
ALSO REPORTEDLY SENT TO PRESIDENT BY GOVERNOR OF PIAUI.
ASIDE FROM PERNAMBUCO GOVERNOR COELHO'S CABLED EXPRESSION
OF SOLIDARITY OF DEC 14 (COELHO HAS MADE NO FURTHER
STATEMENT ON SUBJECT), OTHER NE GOVERNORS HAVE YET TO BE
HEARD FROM. THERE STILL NO SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC REACTION
FROM OTHER LEADING ELEMENTS OF POWER STRUCTURE.

6. ALTHOUGH RUMORS PERSISW THAT WIDESPREAD ARRESTS AND
CASSATIONS IMMINENT EO50X1, CONGEN AWARE ONLY
HANDFUL BEING DETAINED INCLUDING TWO AMERICAN PRIESTS
(SEE RECIFE 1588).

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